4 Subic fishermen saved near Kalayaan

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

Cassava makes sweet comeback in longest roll

Monday, April 11, 2005

Amid pressure, Burma assuming Asean chairmanship



SAILING INTO SUNSET

Senate OK of VAT seen in 2-3 days

Palace takes Drilon at his word



FINAL RESTING PLACE

Pope's death unleashes religious fervor in sin city

Pope immortalized in monuments, railway station, etc.

Agta lass makes Sierra Madre history



CROWD

WEATHER FORECAST

Second FRONTPAGE

Cops pooh-pooh NPA presence

Police downplay military report Reds are at Metro gates

General uprising

Lack resources

Ka Roger happy

Air of fear



Palace unfazed by transport strike threat

Eatery owner abducted

Education should involve everyone, reiterates Abad

By Jeffrey P. Maningo
PDI Mindanao Bureau

ILIGAN CITY—Education Secretary Florencio Abad has warned that Vietnam will overtake the Philippines in five years in terms of quality of education if reforms were not put in place today.

With less than two months to go before the next school year, Abad proposed the involvement of community and local government officials in managing schools.

Speaking before teachers, principals and division heads here, Abad said, "It's high time for the community and the local government sector to take part in running our schools because they, too, are major stakeholders in our educational system."

Under the program, not only teachers and principals but parents and local government leaders will form what Abad called "school governing councils," which would "strengthen and improve the local governance of basic education in the country."

This was not the first time Abad put forth his proposal.

He said the government should first decide what direction the education system should take, pointing out that Filipino students have been seriously lagging behind their Asian counterparts.

Abad cited an international study called "Trends in Math and Science Survey" conducted last year where the Philippines ranked at the bottom of 45 countries surveyed, scoring only "slightly better" than Micronesia, Croatia and South Africa. He did not say where Vietnam was on the list, however.

He said that given a 100-item test, Filipino grade school students only get 58 items right, while high school students only get a score of 44.

Disturbed by the study's findings, Abad said, "The academic achievement of our country has been consistently deteriorating for over three decades now."

He said government has been "under-investing" in education, the "root cause" of the Philippines losing the literacy ratings game now dominated by the more progressive countries like Singapore, Taiwan, South Korea and Japan—the countries that topped the survey.

This year, debt servicing took away 33 percent of the total national budget of P907 billion, with the education sector getting only 12.5 percent of the outlay.

"Unless we increase our budget for education, it would be difficult for us to turn things around," Abad told reporters here.

Compounding the problem is the inadequate number of classrooms. With 19 million students in the three education levels, DepEd needs to build 45,000 classrooms, he said.

But Abad refused to think only in terms of classrooms and teachers. He reported that the number of pupils attending school throughout the country is only 87 percent.

Abad cited Lanao del Norte which registered a participation rate of 71 percent and a completion rate of 45 percent.

"Indeed, only a few Filipinos are in to formal education," he said.

4-day week won't affect diggings

A TOP official of the Department of Public Works and Highways yesterday allayed fears that the government's four-day workweek scheme would affect ongoing road construction and public works projects.

"No, I don't think (the four-day workweek) should affect the department's projects. The contractors are obliged to continue working on a project until it is done and they are not covered by the scheme," DPWH Undersecretary Manuel Bonoan said in an interview.

Bonoan said most of the department's projects were being handled by contractors who are required to finish them within a certain time frame.

He also pointed out that the work scheme is only being implemented in government offices, including the DPWH, because it is meant to help the government save on electricity bills and other operating expenses.

Under the four-day workweek scheme which began last week, employees of national government offices report for work from Monday to Thursday for 10 hours a day, while the offices are closed on Fridays. The scheme will be implemented for two months.

Bonoan said that even if the DPWH's offices were closed on Fridays, the department would continue to deploy the required personnel to project sites in order not to delay the undertakings.

Leila B. Salaverria

Unpaid veterans threaten action

RETIRED soldiers and officers are threatening to call for civil disobedience against the government in protest over Malacañang's inaction on their demand for the payment of P17 billion pensions and other benefits due them over the past years.

But Malacañang yesterday appealed to some 300,000 veterans affected by the delayed payment of their pensions and other benefits to remain patient because the government was still scouring for funds.

Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita said the call for civil disobedience would achieve nothing except to further destabilize the situation.

"I think the retired soldiers and officers are sensible enough to safeguard our security because they are the last ones to think of destabilizing the country," he said.

Ermita said his fellow retired soldiers and officers were all aware that the government was facing financial problems and that it had not allocated any money for the arrears in military pensions in this year's budget.

"They are asking for P17 billion but we are looking to pay a portion of that; one-third would probably suffice just to address their concerns. But we have to ask the Department of Budget first if we can get it from other sources," Ermita said in an interview with reporters.

Ermita said he had already made a recommendation for the government to draft a supplemental budget that would include the payment of the retired soldiers' pensions. However, Ermita said he still could not confirm whether the government had the money to put in the supplemental budget.

As a retired military officer, Ermita said that he too was affected by the delay in the payment of his pension but since he understood the state of the government's finances, he would not join his colleagues' call for civil disobedience.

"I'm not even sure whether you have the right information that they will go to the streets. I think they realize it is not that the President does not want to solve this problem, it's just that we don't have the money for this," Ermita said.

Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

Senate OK of VAT bill seen in 2-3 days

[illegible]

Time to decide

[illegible]

2 session days

[illegible]

No pass through

[illegible]

Compromise version

[illegible]

Amid . . .

[illegible]

Vigorous debates

[illegible]

Road map

[illegible]

Mikey Arroyo said to have slapped exec over quarry tax

By Tonette Orejas
PDI Central Luzon Bureau

Koronadal bomb suspect falls

Cassava makes sweet …



MEMBERS of the Isabela Green Ladies Organization prepare the kilometer-long cassava roll spread on newspapers on the road.

Trauma of pesticide poisoning lingers

By Cynthia D. Balana

Pope's death unleashes religious fervor in sin city

Backpackers in church

Pieces of history

Just a 'beautiful myth'

Papal wish granted

Fulfilling the Roman vocation

Pope immortalized …

Memorable words

'Vacant seat' stamp

Summer games in Makati

Ulama will play

Cops pat selves on back over security at IPU meet

By Luige A. del Puerto

[illegible]

Rock-solid DiMarco keeps Woods at bay



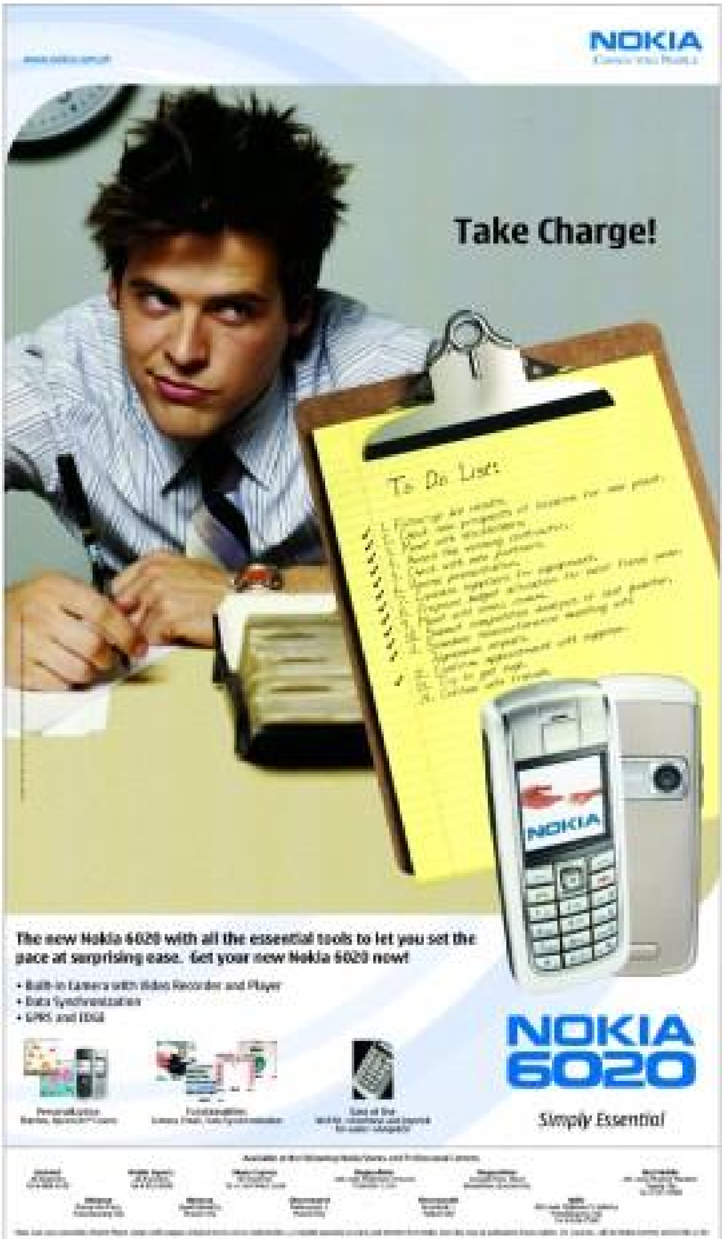
CHRIS DiMarco reacts after sinking a long birdie putt on the second hole during the third round Saturday to keep the buffer between him and Tiger Woods at six shots at the soggy Augusta National Golf Club in Augusta, Georgia.

AUGUSTA, Georgia—Chris DiMarco held a four-stroke lead over hard-charging Tiger Woods at the Masters when darkness halted play at Augusta National on Saturday.



Diokno chair, award set up

THE DAILY GOSPEL



Sunday leads Kings to No. 1 spot



Rock-solid DiMarco keeps Woods . . .

More Masters stories on A28

Rare discoveries in the sea around Tagbilaran

BARE EYE

Recah Trinidad







[illegible] leads the women's Elite division after five races.

Manapul, Bitbit pace Velo races

[illegible]

Prisaa National Games fires off today

[illegible]

NBC SWEEP

RP-Cebuana rips Laguna quintet

[illegible]

Vintage Tañamor barges into semis

[illegible]

P3-M Mactan derby gains big backer

[illegible]

The WORLD

Pope performed miracle, says aide



HIGH FLIER

Anti-Japan rallies rock China anew

Bodies of 96 Maoist rebels recovered after major Nepal clash

Despite wedding, Britons want William to be king











PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

OPINION



Friday the 13th

EDITORIAL

The old swimming hole (2)

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

Life and death

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

Sights and sounds at JPII's funeral

POLITICAL TIDBITS



Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

What Allah has joined together

KRIS-CROSSING MINDANAO



Nash Mastura

Freedom and persecution

THE LONG VIEW



Manuel L. Quezon III

Chinese military bears watching

COMMENTARY

Ernesto M. Hilario

Ernesto M. Hilario is a freelance journalist.

THEY SAID

Legal means

Elections are a tool of peace

Letters

Doing its best

Savings or quality?

High-priced drugs

Across the NATION

Another Bayan Muna leader shot in E. Samar

By Joey A. Gabieta
PDI Visayas Bureau

TACLOBAN CITY—The provincial coordinator of Bayan Muna in Eastern Samar is now fighting for his life after he was shot while driving his motorcycle on Saturday morning in the capital town of Borongan.

Bayan Muna exec's widow pleads to witnesses



MEMBERS of the family of slain Bayan Muna coordinator Romeo Sanchez gather around a candle in homage to their kin.



Massive reforestation of Sierra Madre through aerial seeding planned





NOTICE OF 30-HOUR WATER SERVICE INTERRUPTION IN PARTS OF MANILA AND QUEZON CITY

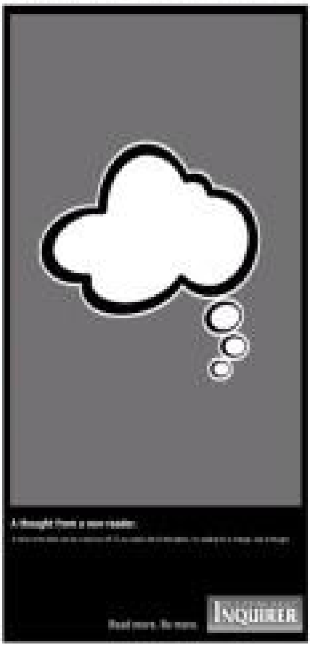
1626

Food-for-work program brings back self-help among villagers

[illegible]











Davao cop chief says he was not relieved for payola

'Balikatan' starts in Basilan

RP-US skyjump shows AFP's old gadgets

Barge with ₱3-M chromite cargo escapes from gov't-owned port

4 Subic fishermen saved near Kalayaan

Agta lass makes Sierra Madre history



Clueless

Agta population

Original inhabitants



Modern clothes

Nonformal education

To be a teacher

Welcome development

Cultural care-giving

Symbolic weave

PASIG REHABILITATION PROGRAM

BF says Marikina river is key



Taguig mayor treats local folk to *lugaw*

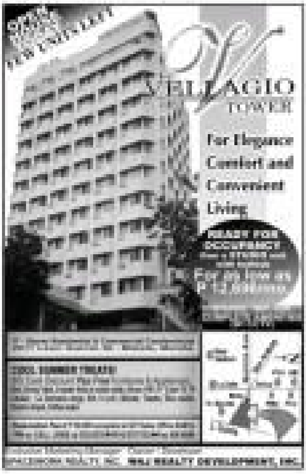


Shot, knifed in QC









METRO

MAKE OR BREAK FOR MMDA

JV gives pink fences one more week



Robbers take P1M and car in Marikina

Jail mosque reopening 'not enough'

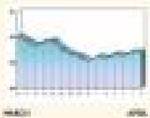
Discrimination

BUSINESS

Consunji firm eyes Maynilad buyout

CURRENCIES

PESO-DOLLAR RATE



STOCK MARKET

Lethargic trading seen

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX



Investors getting restless about VAT delay

NTC test shows congestion between Smart, Digitel

By Abigail L. Ho

SMART Communications Inc. may be blocking calls coming from the networks of Gokongwei-owned Sun Cellular and Digital Telecommunications Philippines Inc.

According to a voice traffic monitoring report from the National Telecommunications Commission, congestion does exist between Smart's mobile phone network and those of Digitel and Sun Cellular.

The voice traffic monitoring was conducted on the Gokongwei firms' end, with technical staff from the NTC's common carriers authorization department and Digitel doing the required tests.

On the landline side, the test was done on March 28 from 10:00 p.m. to 12 a.m. the next day. For Sun Cellular, the monitoring activities were conducted on April 1 from 12 a.m. to 2 a.m.

Results of the Digitel-to-Smart test indicated that out of 180 switches present, only 37 were occupied at around 11:50 p.m. This means that there were 144 idle switches.

Despite this, only 15 calls out of a total 44 came through successfully, the report stated.

"Based on the foregoing results, it appears that there is call congestion in the interconnection link between Digitel and Smart. Considering the average number of available devices out of the total of 180 available devices, call congestion should not have existed," it said.

For Sun-to-Smart calls, the results were the same.

At 1 a.m., out of 44 call attempts, only 10 calls were successfully connected.

Despite proving that congestion did exist between Smart's network and those of Digitel and Sun Cellular, the NTC report said this did not prove that Smart was actually blocking calls coming from the Gokongwei firms' networks.

"Congestion may either be due to several factors such as call blocking and restriction. However, it is not conclusive to state that the calls are actually being restricted. This requires that a test must also be conducted on the other end of the interconnection link," the NTC report said.

Smart legal and corporate business group head [illegible] said in an earlier statement that Sun Cellular was just using those allegations of call blocking as a "scapegoat," considering that Sun Cellular's call connection rate may be [illegible] the NTC-mandated [illegible] percent.

Yulo-lation

COCKTALES

Victor C. Agustin

THE HEIRS of the late Chief Justice Jose Yulo lost in their bid to revoke a 1977 donation of a 4.1-hectare property in Canlubang in the San Pablo diocese, as well as their decades-long, violence-ridden fight to exclude nearly 235 hectares of their former sugar estate from agrarian reform.

The Yulos, through ex-Calamba Mayor Jose Miguel Yulo, tried beginning 1990 to take back the donated property, claiming that not only had the diocese failed to establish a home for the aged as a condition for the donation, but that the local church had also deeded leased portions of the property to other parties without the prior written consent of CJ Yulo and Ines, the donors.

In rebuffing the Yulos, the SC Third Division, through justice Cancio Garcia, agreed with an earlier Court of Appeals decision that the diocese committed only "casual breaches," not enough grounds to revoke the donation.

(For those who believe in conspiracy theories, the Third division is chaired by Artemio Panganiban, the high court's resident Catholic theologian.)

Besides, the SC noted, the diocese had leased portions of the property precisely to raise funds for the planned home for the aged.

"This court cannot consider the requirement of a prior written consent by the donor ... as an absolute ground for the revocation of the donation because such a condition, if not correlated with the purpose of the donation, would constitute undue restriction of the donee's right of ownership over the donated property," the Supreme Court said.

According to court documents, the San Pablo diocese had also wanted to exchange the donated property, part of what used to be the Canlubang Sugar Estate, to a more rural location since Canlubang has now become a factory site.

The setback is the second such received by the landed family from the Supreme Court last month, when the Special First Division chaired by no less than Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr. upheld the Agrarian [illegible] acquisition of the nearly 235 hectares in Barangay Casile, Cabuyao, from the Yulos under the comprehensive agrarian reform program.

In an attempt to clear the disputed property of what it claimed were "squat-

COCKTALES B4

SM PRIME HOLDINGS

NOTICE OF REGULAR ANNUAL STOCKHOLDERS' MEETING
April 25, 2005, 3:00 P.M.
Rizal Ballroom A&B, Makati Shangri-La Hotel
Makati City

To all Stockholders:

Please take notice that the 2005 annual meeting of the stockholders of SM Prime Holdings, Inc. will be held on April 25, 2005 at 3:00 P.M. at the Rizal Ballroom A&B, Makati Shangri-La Hotel, Makati City. The proposed agenda of the meeting is set forth below:

AGENDA

1. Call to order.
2. Certification of notice and quorum.
3. Approval of minutes of annual meeting of stockholders held on April 22, 2004.
4. Annual Report.
5. General ratification of the acts of the Board of Directors and the management from the date of the last annual stockholders' meeting up to the date of this meeting.
6. Election of directors for 2005-2006.
7. Appointment of external auditors.
8. Other matters.
9. Adjournment.

The Board of Directors has fixed the end of trading hours of the Philippine Stock Exchange (PSE) on March 23, 2005 as the record date for the determination of stockholders entitled to notice of and to vote at such meeting and any adjournment thereof.

Makati City, March 15, 2005

BY THE ORDER OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

ISIDRO EMMANUEL C. PARAS
Corporate Secretary
SM Prime Holdings, Inc.



Consunji firm eyes …

3 things wrong with RP agriculture

No Free Lunch

Cielito F. Habito



Weak incentives

Credit access

Overcentralization

Napocor gets DOF nod to float P5B in bonds

SEC may allow management unit to take over CAP

Ayala unit to expand in Asia, US

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

[illegible]

Cocktales

[illegible]

Deflowered festivals

[illegible]

Money-go-round

[illegible]

Heard through the grapevine

[illegible]



Investors getting ...

[illegible]

Purisima's plan to raise withholding tax rates

QUESTIONS OF POLICIES

Raul C. Concepcion

BSP won't follow in Fed's footsteps

By Doris C. Dumlao

DOE sets fund for alternate fuels

REVENUE MEASURE

Gov't mulling over across-the-board hike in tariffs

Group claims wood shortage hurting furniture business

New, refurbished airports to boost Philippine tourism

LIFESTYLE



THE STATE of the art along Edsa today

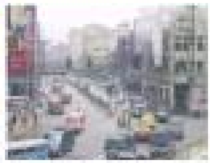
City of billboards—uggh!

PRIDE OF PLACE

Augusto F. Villalon

Offensive

Rare vistas



BILLBOARDS still clutter Mission Reyes Street in the University Belt despite successful beautification campaign by building owners, businessmen and Far Eastern University

Outdoor advertising has rendered Manila ugly beyond belief







Concrete jungle

Dumaguete does 'Vagina,' one last time







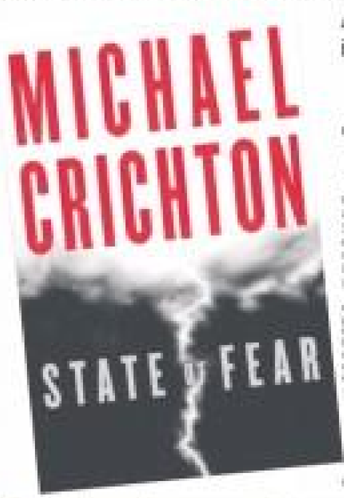
'Sleeping Beauty': Tribute to nun who awakened dormant dance art



Summer dance classes

Michael Crichton's State of emergency

As relevant as it is radical, the 'Jurassic Park' author's latest is a fun if predictable Hollywood-ready thrill ride



Two islands, one culture

More 'Twisted' from Zafra



Vivid memoirs of a great



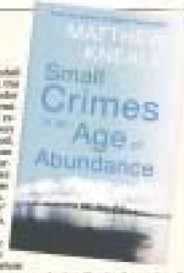
Garcia Marquez's memoir offers long, dense, often marvelous chapters and passages, broken only by snippets of dialogue remembered through the decades

UP launches Programa Lumbera

Hot summer reads







novel

writer

LIFESTYLE



"FERTILE in the Night"

Assimilating influences from both East and West, Duddley Diaz produces art that's visually related to Gauguin's yet indigenously Filipino

Creation myths and miraculous births in metal and wood

By Constantino C. Tejero

DUDDLEY Diaz, the Filipino sculptor based in Italy, is once again in the country to showcase his peculiar art marrying Western and Asiatic themes and motifs, styles and techniques.

After graduating with a Bachelor of Fine Arts from University of the Philippines, Diaz took up further studies in sculpture and painting at the Accademia di Belle Arti in Florence and at the Vermont Studio Center in the United States.

Assimilating influences from both East and West, he produces art that's visually related to Gauguin's yet indigenously Filipino, even somewhat pre-[illegible] [illegible]



"ANDROGYNE"

[illegible]

"I have always wanted to talk about life and the mysteries surrounding it," says the artist. "That is why you will see stories of creation, pregnant goddesses and miraculous births."

[illegible]

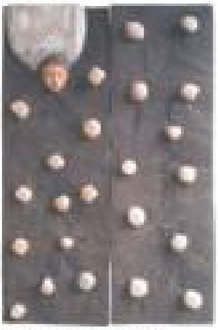
Fertility and origin

[illegible]

In "Fertile in the Night," a brown naked male form lies supine on the green ground

[illegible] C5

Creation myths and miraculous births in metal and wood



"FLYING Figure over a Starry Night"



Mosques and churches

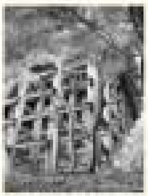


"MEDUSA"



"QUEEN Maya"

Exhibit of Orlina photographs



JAPANESE heritage structure

Daet festival honors country's first monument to Rizal

In QUAINT Daet, capital of Ca-



Freshly conjured indie art

Eloquent portraits





